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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
5394	13.07.2019	15.07.2019	Visakhapatnam Andhra Pradesh	The Hindu English Newspaper 13 th July, 2019/Page No. 08
Title:	Two persons from Araku test positive for Anthrax in district Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU- Visakhapatnam, SSU-Andhra Pradesh			

Two persons from Madagada village in Araku mandal who were admitted to King George Hospital with symptoms of cutaneous anthrax tested positive for the disease on Saturday, sparking panic in the Agency area.

According to officials from the Health Department, anthrax can spread in three forms — cutaneous anthrax (through the skin), pulmonary anthrax (through inhalation), and gastrointestinal anthrax (through the stomach). Agency areas mostly register cases of cutaneous anthrax, where anthrax spores get into the skin usually through a cut or a scrape, which can happen when a person handles infected animals.

"In the case of Araku mandal, both persons who were affected with anthrax allegedly cut the meat which was purchased from a weekly shandy," said Mr. Kalyan Prasad, an official from the Health Department and the Nodal Officer for Swine Flu.

"After consuming such meat, there are chances of contracting gastrointestinal anthrax. Fortunately, it did not happen in this case as the pores might have been killed due to the high cooking temperature," Mr. Kalyan Prasad said.

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Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.

**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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Officials said that even when a dead animal is left on the ground without proper cremation, the area is likely to get affected by anthrax. If grass grows in that area and some animals feed on them, the animals are vulnerable to anthrax. If a farmer cultivates a field on the same grass, he is likely to contract cutaneous anthrax through his legs, officials said.

51 cases in three years

In 2018, 35 anthrax cases were reported from the Agency mandals, while in 2017, the total number of cases stood at 14. According to officials, Munchingput, G.K. Veedhi, G. Madugula, Dumbriguda, Araku, and Chintapalle mandals are the areas most vulnerable to anthrax outbreaks.

“Weekly shandies are a common point where most of the tribals buy meat. A few traders from Odisha enter Visakhapatnam Agency and sell unprocessed meat, which is leading to a rise in anthrax cases. There should be a vigil on the sale of meat at weekly shandies,” said G. Venkateswar, Sub-Collector, Paderu. Mr. Venkateswar also said that he would raise the issue of sale of such unprocessed meat with the Integrated Tribal Development Authority (ITDA) officials soon, adding that he expected them to come up with a solution to this.

A senior official from ITDA pointed out that even the vaccination programme done by the animal husbandary department is not up to the mark.

District Medical & Health Officer (DMHO-Visakhapatnam) S. Tirupathi Rao said that the two patients who were affected with anthrax are being treated by KGH officials with antibiotics.

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